

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 015484 TOSEC 010109

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ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:MDRAPER:AMF

APPROVED BY NEA:ALATHERTON,JR.

S/S :FORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 015484 TOSEC 010109

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, LE, SY

SUBJECT: ACTION MEMORANDUM: APPROACH TO SYRIANS ABOUT PLA
MOVEMENTS (S/S NO. 7601372)

-

FROM ATHERTON

REF: STATE 14281 (CLEARED BY THE SECRETARY PER SECTO 1008)

1. AMBASSADOR MURPHY HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO SEE GENERAL SHIHABI TO DISCUSS THE IMPLICATIONS OF PLA MOVEMENTS INTO LEBANON, OWING TO THE LATTER'S PRESENCE IN BEIRUT IN SYRIA'S MEDIATION EFFORT THERE. WE INFORMED MURPHY THAT WE PREFERRED TO AWAIT SHIHABI'S RETURN, SINCE WE DID NOT WANT TO ESCALATE THE MATTER TO THE ASAD LEVEL AT THIS JUNCTURE.
2. WE ARE UNSURE WHEN SHIHABI WILL RETURN TO DAMASCUS, BUT BELIEVE WE SHOULD SOMEHOW PUT THIS APPROACH ON RECORD BEFORE TOO LONG BECAUSE WE HAVE ALREADY INFORMED THE ISRAELIS AND KING HUSSEIN THAT WE HAD INSTRUCTED AMBASSADOR MURPHY TO MAKE SUCH AN APPROACH.

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3. FOLLOWING FOR YOUR APPROVAL IS A PROPOSED MESSAGE IN-

STRUCTURING MURPHY HOW TO PROCEED IF SHIHABI DOES NOT RETURN
BY THE END OF THURSDAY, JANUARY 22:

BEGIN TEXT:

TO: DAMASCUS NIACT IMMEDIATE
EXDIS
EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, LE, SY
SUBJECT: APPROACH TO SYRIANS ABOUT PLA MOVEMENTS

REF: STATE 14281
FOR AMBASSADOR FROM THE SECRETARY

ALTHOUGH THE SYRIAN MEDIATION EFFORT IN LEBANON MAY HAVE
PRODUCED SOME INITIAL SUCCESS, SOMEWHAT OVERTAKING THE UR-
GENCY IN MAKING YOUR APPROACH ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF PLA
MOVEMENTS FROM SYRIA INTO LEBANON, IT REMAINS NECESSARY TO
PUT THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR CONCERN ON RECORD WITH THE SYR-
IANS. WE HAVE ALREADY INFORMED KING HUS-
SEIN AND THE ISRAELIS THAT WE HAD INSTRUCTED YOU TO DO SO.
IN ADDITION, IT MAY HAVE VALUE WITH REGARD TO SUCCEEDING
STAGES OF THE LEBANESE CRISIS.

WE CONTINUE TO PREFER THAT THIS APPROACH BE MADE
PERSONALLY TO SHIHABI, BECAUSE THIS IS THE CHANNEL YOU
HAVE BEEN USING REGULARLY IN REGARD TO THE LEBANESE SITU-
ATION AND BECAUSE WE HAVE JUDGED IT SHOULD NOT BE
BROUGHT TO THE ASAD LEVEL AT THIS JUNCTURE. IN ANY
EVENT, SHIHABI WOULD CERTAINLY PASS ITS SUBSTANCE TO ASAD.

IF IT APPEARS THAT SHIHABI WILL NOT RETURN TO DAMAS-
CUS IN TIME FOR YOU TO SEE HIM AT SOME TIME ON THURSDAY,
JANUARY 22, YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO CONVEY THE PRINCIPAL
POINTS IN THE APPROVED APPROACH TO A TRUSTED OFFICER IN
SHIHABI'S OFFICE OR TO ASAD'S PRIVATE SECRETARY. END
MESSAGE.

4. RECOMMENDATION: THAT YOU SEND THE ABOVE MESSAGE.

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APPROVED: ALATHERTON,JR

NOT CLEARED OUTSIDE NEA.
SISCO

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To: SECRETARY
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